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ABSTRACT

This project brief provides a summary of the Community Colleges Broadening Horizons through Service Learning project, supported by the Corporation for National Service and administered by the American Association of Community Colleges. The project was developed to increase the number, quality, and sustainability of service learning programs in community colleges. It features model programs, national data collection, and an information clearinghouse. The project also provides professional development opportunities and technical assistance through workshops, mentoring, presentations, publications, a Web site, and a consultant referral service. The key campus activities include: community assets/needs assessment, college/community partnerships, longitudinal evaluation study, service learning offices, faculty development, curricular integration, critical reflection, student leadership, civic education, community outreach, and program sustainability. Ten model programs are summarized: (1) Teaching and Learning Consortium (Century Community and Technical College, MN); (2) Learning and Serving Education & Reflection (Gadsen State Community College, AL); (3) Occupational Service Learning (Iowa Western Community College); (4) Broadening Horizons in Northwest Arkansas (Northwest Arkansas Community College); (5) Seeing through New Eyes (Nunez Community College, LA); (6) A Collaborative Approach to Service Learning (Oakton Community College, IL); (7) Service Learning and Global Studies (Richland College, TX); (8) Young Speakers Bureau (Skagit Valley College, WA); (9) Southwestern Service Learning Center (Southwestern College, CA); and (10) Horizons Project (University College, OH). (Contains 25 references.) (RDG)

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PROJECT BRIEF

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SERVICE LEARNING

JC 000 279

COMMUNITY COLLEGES BROADENING HORIZONS THROUGH SERVICE LEARNING, 1997-2000

By Gail Robinson

The *Community Colleges Broadening Horizons through Service Learning* project, supported by the Corporation for National Service and administered by the American Association of Community Colleges, was developed to increase the number, quality, and sustainability of service learning programs in community colleges nationwide. It features model programs, national data collection and dissemination, and an information clearinghouse. In addition, *Horizons* provides professional development opportunities and technical assistance through regional workshops, mentoring, presentations, publications, a Web site, and a consultant referral service.

Service learning combines community service with classroom instruction, focusing on critical, reflective thinking as well as personal and civic responsibility. Service learning programs involve students in activities that address local needs while developing their academic skills and commitment to their community. The *Horizons* project promotes the value of service learning not only to students and faculty, but also to college administrators and community members.

Ten colleges were selected in a national competition in 1997 to become *Horizons* Colleges. Working in the areas of education, public safety, human needs, and the environment, they are developing service learning programs that can be replicated at other institutions. Experienced practitioners from four other colleges serve as a mentor team, providing advice and hands-on assistance. The *Horizons* service learning programs involve nearly 50 disciplines and reach community members ranging from elementary school children to senior citizens.

- ***Horizons Colleges***

  Century College, MN
  Gadsden State Community College, AL
  Iowa Western Community College, IA
  NorthWest Arkansas Community College, AR
  Nunez Community College, LA
  Oakton Community College, IL
  Richland College, TX
  Skagit Valley College, WA
  Southwestern College, CA
  University College, Univ. of Cincinnati, OH

- ***Horizons Mentors***

  Albuquerque TVI Community College, NM
  Glendale Community College, CA
  Johnson County Community College, KS
  Miami-Dade Community College, FL

KEY CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

- Community assets/needs assessment
- College/community partnerships
- Longitudinal evaluation study
- Service learning offices
- Faculty development
- Curricular integration
- Critical reflection
- Student leadership
- Civic education
- Community outreach
- Program sustainability

COMMUNITY COLLEGES Broadening HORIZONS THROUGH SERVICE LEARNING

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TLC: Teaching and Learning Consortium

The Century College service learning program is designed to serve people across the lifespan with a focus on children and families in crisis. The primary community partners are the Salvation Army and a family violence network. The college serves a diverse population in the Twin Cities suburbs. The goals of the program include strengthening and expanding partnerships with community service agencies; engendering a sense of civic responsibility; emphasizing and rewarding service learning as a teaching and learning tool; developing a certificate program for professionals who work with children in crisis; increasing service learning opportunities among faculty and students across disciplines; and measuring student, faculty, and community outcomes to provide ongoing quality programs. Students and faculty from speech, nursing, English as a second language, human services, marketing, sociology, and women's studies have participated in service learning. Students also have the option of designing their own service learning experience using the college's Center for Workforce Development.

Project Highlights

- Center for Teaching and Learning
- Faculty development
- Student scholarships
- Workforce development

Gadsden State Community College

Gadsden, Alabama

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Learning And Serving Education & Reflection (LASER)

In northeast Alabama, Gadsden State Community College's Learning And Serving Education & Reflection project is an outgrowth of a student service corps, the LASERs, initiated in 1993. Through the corps, students earn college tuition by giving 75 service hours per semester to nonprofit community agencies. GSCC developed a service learning orientation class to assist students from all disciplines in placement and follow-up to improve the quality of their service experiences. Through this course and another on Web site development for community service agencies, student service opportunities are linked with individual learning goals. Instructors in various disciplines are adding service learning to their curricula, including electrical engineering technology, nursing and allied health, environmental science, and court reporting.

Project Highlights

- Student leadership program
- Faculty development
- Web links to agencies
- Active presidential support

Occupational Service Learning

Iowa Western Community College's service learning initiative began in the occupational disciplines and is housed in the college's cooperative education office. In 1998 and 1999, building trades students provided nearly 4,000 hours of service for community needs such as building an office for Habitat for Humanity, upgrading a local family emergency shelter, making a southwest Iowa nature trail wheelchair-accessible, and constructing a ranger station in a county park along the Missouri River. The program expanded with the involvement of professional office careers, nursing, computer-aided design technology, and a local vocational high school. IWCC's service learning program received high marks from its state accreditation team, and will be showcased during the national accreditation process.

Project Highlights

- Technical disciplines
- Group service learning projects
- Occupational focus
- Accreditation impact

Iowa Western Community College
Council Bluffs, Iowa

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Broadening Horizons in NorthWest Arkansas

A small college in a mostly rural but fast-growing area of the country, NorthWest Arkansas Community College has embraced service learning in many disciplines. Faculty in diverse courses including economics, psychology, college algebra, and criminal justice have partnered with such agencies as Head Start, a hospice, a museum, and an adult daycare facility. In addition, NWACC has piloted an America Reads tutoring program with local schools. The college provides faculty development opportunities such as stipends and other funds for service learning faculty to travel together to conferences and to NWACC's *Horizons* mentor college to learn from experienced instructors face-to-face.

Project Highlights

- Student services/academic affairs collaboration
- Federal work-study positions
- One-on-one faculty development
- Student recognition awards

NorthWest Arkansas Community College
Bentonville, Arkansas

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Seeing through New Eyes: Improving a Child's Visual Health and Perspective

Nunez Community College's service learning program began as a collaborative effort between the Louisiana Lions Eye Foundation and the college's opticianry program to provide vision screening for children in the New Orleans area. The opticianry students practiced on-the-job skills while performing initial vision screenings. Children who failed the screenings were referred to ophthalmologists and the opticianry students made the glasses that doctors prescribed—all at no cost to the families. Integration of service learning activities has expanded rapidly into 12 additional disciplines including business, culinary arts, education, machine tool technology, psychology, speech, and welding. Community partners include women's and family shelters, K-12 schools, a zoo and aquarium, and the local police department.

Project Highlights

- Developing statewide network
- Career training
- Regional workshops
- Key administrator involvement

Oakton Community College

Des Plaines, Illinois

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A Collaborative Approach to Service Learning

The Oakton Community College service learning program began in 1996 with one class and two faculty members. Their approach to a combined sociology-psychology course incorporated service learning as a way for students to get more out of the course content. The program has grown to include 28 faculty offering service learning in one or more of their courses, and students serving in more than 100 Chicago-area agencies. Working with the Office of Student Activities, faculty leaders are committed to expanding the number of community service sites, working with community partners to develop class-based projects that meet mutual needs, recruiting more faculty from a variety of disciplines, and working with faculty to ensure the service experience is academically rigorous.

Project Highlights

- Cross-disciplinary course
- Service learning newsletter
- Large-group projects
- Faculty development

Service Learning and Global Studies

Richland College's service learning program got its start in global studies, and has expanded to such disciplines as horticulture, government, and speech. All honors scholars and global studies scholars must complete a service learning project. The college's administration provided internal funding for a full-time service learning coordinator and office space to house the program. Community partners include hospitals, elementary schools, community outreach centers, and a hospice for children with HIV/AIDS. Student service opportunities range from working with campers with physical disabilities to providing bilingual support for a Dallas literacy project. Richland is developing an articulation agreement with a university community service management degree program to ensure transfer of service learning course credits.

Project Highlights

- Service learning office
- Faculty guide
- Informational videotape
- Large-group reflection

Richland College

Dallas, Texas

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Young Speakers Bureau

The *Horizons* Young Speakers Bureau project at Skagit Valley College matches speech and communication majors with middle school students to address youth-related safety issues. Collaborating with their SVC mentors, local police, and firefighters, sixth-graders learn the basics of speech and communication while learning about fire and bicycle safety. The middle school students then present health and safety programs to elementary school children. The *Horizons* initiative helps widen the base of Skagit Valley College's service learning partnerships while raising awareness of important health and safety issues of northwest Washington youth. Service learning is part of a larger experiential education program at Skagit Valley incorporating internships, cooperative education, and independent study.

Project Highlights

- Cross-disciplinary reflection
- K-12/college collaboration
- Small-group reflection
- Stand-alone service learning credits

Skagit Valley College

Mt. Vernon, Washington

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Southwestern Service Learning Center

Southwestern College
Chula Vista, California

Southwestern College's broad-based service learning program is offered in over 40 different courses, including Spanish, English, art, environmental studies, history, speech, and psychology, and in a stand-alone service learning course. The college has developed partnerships with more than 50 San Diego-area agencies, including the Olympic training center, environmental organizations, and a meal service for homebound people with AIDS. Southwestern sponsors a volunteer fair each semester to connect agencies with service learners and other interested members of the college community. Service learners who complete at least 15 hours of service over the course of a semester receive certificates signed by the college president and an entry on their transcripts.

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Project Highlights

- Service learning office
- Faculty coordinator
- Agency orientation
- Transcript notation

Horizons Project

University College
University of Cincinnati
Cincinnati, Ohio

Service learning began at University College, a two-year college within the University of Cincinnati, in 1998 with a pilot in three sections of an English composition course, and is expanding into language arts literature and other disciplines. The college established partnerships with a family resource center, an arts and humanities resource center for older adults, and a community center. University College's program is part of a university-wide service learning initiative that includes workgroups on faculty issues, operational structure, university/community agency partnering, and student issues. One staff member had 50 percent of his time reassigned to initiate, maintain, and evaluate community partnerships. An end-of-year celebration honors an outstanding service learning faculty member, student, and community partner.

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Project Highlights

- Faculty development
- Regional conference
- University-wide advisory group
- Student scholarships

Horizons Mentor Team

Albuquerque TVI Community College

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Service learning is offered to all academic and occupational disciplines at Albuquerque TVI. The program has developed lasting partnerships with community agencies, public schools, and government entities since its 1995 inception. The program reached sustainability in 1999 with the creation of the Office of Experiential Education, which includes a full-time director, faculty coordinator, and federal work-study positions. TVI's award-winning service learning program has a strong presence in the Albuquerque community and has made a significant impact on student academic achievement, retention, critical thinking, analytical problem-solving, and interpersonal skills development.

Glendale Community College

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The Service Learning Center at Glendale Community College places more than 1,200 students per year in suburban Los Angeles nonprofit agencies, schools, and civic organizations. These students come from courses with service learning options across the curriculum, with over 40 faculty participating in the program. The center also works with its community partners in developing projects that address local needs. Participating agencies are invited to biannual fairs, focus groups, and orientations. GCC's One America project gives students an opportunity to develop leadership skills by coordinating issue-based workshops and presentations for their peers, faculty, staff, and community members. The Service Learning Center was founded in 1994 and is funded completely by the college district.

Johnson County Community College

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www.jccc.net/careers/serv_learn

Begun in 1993, Johnson County Community College's curriculum-based service learning program is committed to meeting multifaceted and interdependent academic and community needs in the Kansas City area. Balancing the dual mandates of service and learning, the program emphasizes diversity, responsibility, and reciprocity; encourages understanding, leadership, and commitment; and ultimately reflects the vision and values of JCCC. The institution's Center for Teaching and Learning plays a vital role in faculty development and curricular integration. JCCC initiated an annual international service learning trip in 1998, bringing health care and construction assistance to an impoverished community in Mexico.

Miami-Dade Community College

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Miami-Dade Community College's Center for Community Involvement is housed within the academic division of the college and is responsible for all service learning and America Reads literacy tutoring activities. M-DCC began a formal service learning initiative in 1994. With full-service centers on three campuses and outreach programs to all six campuses, the Center serves the entire college. Primary activities include supporting approximately 75 faculty and 1,400 service learning students each semester, and overseeing an America Reads program with 140 federal work-study tutors. Key program components include faculty coordinators on each campus, the implementation of "citizenship forums" for all service learning students and faculty, a comprehensive faculty development plan, a service learning student ambassador program, and workshops for agency partners.

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American Association for Higher Education
www.aahe.org/service/srv-lrn.htm

American Association of Community Colleges
www.aacc.nche.edu/servicelearning

Campus Compact National Center for Community Colleges
www.mc.maricopa.edu/academic/compact

Campus Outreach Opportunity League
www.cool2serve.org

Community-Campus Partnerships for Health
www.futurehealth.ucsf.edu/ccph.html

Corporation for National Service
www.nationalservice.org

International Partnership for Service Learning
www.studyabroad.com/psl

Invisible College
www.selu.edu/Academics/ArtsSciences/IC

Learn and Serve America Exchange
www.lsaexchange.org

National Service-Learning Clearinghouse
www.umn.edu/~serve

National Society for Experiential Education
www.nsee.org

Points of Light Foundation
www.pointsoflight.org

Service-Learning on the World-Wide Web
csf.colorado.edu/sl

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